Relaxation of Visa curbs for Pakistan

2679. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have relaxed visa curbs for some eminent Pakistani nationals;

(b) if so, the norms prescribed for the purpsoe;

(c) the persons covered under this category; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINSITER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (d) Consistent with the policy of working ot promote contacts between the peoples of India and Pakistan at all levels and in keeping with the understandings reached with Pakistan during the visit of Prime Minsiter, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Pakistan on February 20-21, 1999 and in the subsequent meeting of the External Affairs Minister, Shri Jaswant Singh with the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Sartaj Aziz in Sri lanka on March 19, 1999, Government of India have relaxed visa and travel restricitions for the following categories of Pakistani nationals;

(i) Judges of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and of the High Courts.

(ii) Attorney General, Solicitor General and Chairperson of the Supreme Court Bar association.

(iii) Editors-in-Chief and owners/ principal funcitonaries of national newspapers.

(iv) Members of National Cricket and Hockey teams during their tours of India.

(v) Members of the National Assembly and the Senate, Leaders and Deputy Leaders of Provincial Assemblies and Leaders and Deputy Leaders of Opposition in Provincial Assemblies

(vi) Vice Chancellors of recognised/ approved Universities.

(vii) Secretaries/Secretary rank officers of the Federal Government of Pakistan.

(viii) Spouse, dependent children, i.e., sons upto 18 years of age and unmarried daughters of persons in above-mentioned categories.

The above-mentioned categories of Pakistani nationals would be exempted from police reporting. They will be entitled to multiple entry visas of upto one year duration. They will also be exempted from the requirement of obtaining city-specific visas and will be entitled to travel anywhere in India except certain specified areas for which prior permission would be required. They will also be allowed to enter into and exit from India through any of the five designated checkposts identified for Pakistani nationals.

Views of G-8 Countries on Lifting the Sanctions Imposed on India

2680. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the G-8 task force on India's nuclear tests met recently in Tokyo;

(b) if so, whether there was any unanimous decision;

(c) the countries which were in favour of lifting or easing the sanctions imposed against India and which countries were against; and

(d) what action Government have taken or propsoe to take to convey India's stand to the countries which are not in favour of lifting the sanctions?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) A meeting of the senior officials of G-8 task Force was held in Tokyo on 11 February 1999 and it

discussed the issues arising out of the nuclear tests by India. The meeting noted with appreciation that India had made some positive statements in the field of nuclear non-proliferation after the nuclear tests. Subsequent to this meeting, on a project approved for funding by the World Bank, some of the G-8 countries voted for the proposal while others abstained.

(d) The Government regards all unilateral economic measures imposed against India as unjustified and counterproductive and is of the view that they should be lifted. The Government is in touch with G-8 countries at various levels on the related issues.

Passport Adalats

2681. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to hold passport adalats all over the country to redress grievances in obtaining passports;

(b) if so, the locations identified where such adalats are likely to be set up;

(c) the number of passport seekers registered with each of the passport office, State-wise as on 31st January, 1999; and

(d) the time by which the passport seekers would get their passports?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) The Passport Office, Hyderabad and Regional Passport Office, Calcutta have held passport adalats recently on an experimental basis. It is proposed that gradually all passport offices would hold these adalats.

(c) A statement showing the number of passport seekers registered with each of the passport offices as on 31st January 1999 is attached. (*See* below)

(d) It is Government's endeavour to issue a passport within five weeks. Wherever delays occur, these are usually due to increase in number of passport applications, receipt of negative or incomplete police reports, discrepancies in documents submitted by the applicants and submission of incompleted application forms.

Statement

Number of Applications Pending with Passport Offices as on 31.1.1999

Sl. No.	Passport Office	Applications Pending
1.	Ahmedabad	17129
2.	Bangalore	380968
3.	Bareilly	23856
4.	Bhopal	3477
5.	Bhubaneshwar	4861
6.	Mumbai	27211
7.	Calcutta	12167
8.	Chandigarh	28491
9.	Cochin	9489
10.	Delhi	25143
11.	Ghaziabad	6610
12.	Guwahati	2875
13.	Hyderabad	30883
14.	Jaipur	29129
15.	Jalandhar	34117
16.	Jammu	7604
17.	Kozhikode	29018
18.	Lucknow	22681
19.	Chennai	29640
20.	Nagpur	1443
21.	Panaji	861
22.	Patna	7395
23.	Pune	1257
24.	Srinagar	2641
25.	Thane	1597
26.	Trichy	59469
27.	Trivandrum	7331
28.	Visakhapatnam	4532